

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 555
By Harper

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate Coach Maurice Fitzgerald and the 1997 Pearl-Cohn High School football team on winning their second consecutive Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association Class 4-A state championship.

WHEREAS, with exceptional poise, exemplary determination and great skill, the exciting 1997 Pearl-Cohn High School football team has recently climaxed an excellent season by winning their second consecutive Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association Class 4-A state championship; and

WHEREAS, after suffering a heart-breaking, one-point loss in the first game of the season, Pearl-Cohn fought back to win their remaining 9 regular season contests, impressively beating Maplewood 36-0, Kenwood 42-0, Beech 51-18, Cheatham County 34-8, Goodpasture 36-3, Whites Creek 14-6, Springfield 12-7, Clarksville 62-0 and Stratford 52-0; and

WHEREAS, in the opening rounds of the playoffs, the Firebirds stopped the upward path of the Shelbyville Central Eagles 42-0, charmed the Whites Creek Cobras 30-0, stung the Springfield Yellow Jackets 28-0, and defeated the Dyersburg Trojans in a fiercely fought battle 40-0, to gain a coveted spot in the Clinic Bowl championship game, which was played December 6, 1997 at historic Dudley Field on the campus of Vanderbilt University; and

WHEREAS, Pearl-Cohn trounced Maryville 36-16 in the Clinic Bowl; and

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WHEREAS, their sterling 14-1 overall record represents an enviable winning percentage of .930; and

WHEREAS, the powerful Firebird offense scored a phenomenal 397 points, an average of 28 per game, while their stingy defense posted an admirable 8 shutouts and gave up only 81 points, an average of 6 per game; and

WHEREAS, highly respected and regarded head coach Maurice Fitzgerald has done an outstanding job. His capable Assistant Coaches were: Craig Gilliam, Glen Seabrooks, Floyd Reed, and Tommy Wilson; and

WHEREAS, Anthony Hall, Jr., Executive Principal; Henry Merriwether, Assistant Principal and Mary Nollner, Assistant Principal, have been very supportive of the team's efforts; and

WHEREAS, the members of this talented team were: seniors, James Cross, Andreas Fields, Kenneth Gates, John Henderson, Tyrone Hodge, Alexander Dizol, Tehran Dotson, Tyshawn Jones, Tyreese Lawless, Danny Perry, James Pratt, Reggie Ridley, Cory Roberts, Terry Smith, Michael Smith, Derrick Venzen, Albert Washington, and McKinley Young, Jr.; juniors, Ronald Slay, Santonio Beard, Wallace Bowman, Michael Claybrooks, Kendall Hoskins, Joey Martin, Dale Powell, Kevin Ross, Jeremy Stewart, Antwan Teasley, Cedrick Wilson, and William Lockett; sophomores, James Chatman, Brian Claybrooks, Louis B. Drake III, Marcus Fitzgerald, Robert Hall, Damien Harris, Donovan Hodison, Cedrick Leslie, Ryan Powers, Jonath Samuels, Jeremiah Smelly, Antwan Williams, and Solatheus Benford, and freshmen, Marquise Anderson, Keanthony Brooks, Terrance Bush, Fallon Dorsey, Cameron Estleman, Stanley Gregory, Jeff Gooch, Santia Harvell, Antwain Lytle, Brandon Newsom, Lamont Richardson, O'Taviuss Settles, Austin Thompson, Jerome Trice, Antonio Wade, and James Wright. Each of these players made a significant contribution to the success the team has enjoyed this season; and

WHEREAS, the state of Tennessee takes great pride in the stellar accomplishments of athletic teams who win state championships; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE-HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we honor and congratulate Coach Maurice Fitzgerald and the 1997-1998 Pearl-Cohn High School football team and wish them well in their future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That appropriate copies of this resolution be prepared for presentation to the school and each person named above, with this final clause omitted from such copies.